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ABSTRACT

An important issue confronting newly emerging nations in Africa is the development of a new curriculum to reflect the changing norms and views of the past. Looking at nations that share a common British educational tradition, a study done in Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe asked which topics and categories of cultural knowledge were essential for the development of a national cultural literacy. Another concern was whether one ethnic group or a mosaic of groups would be represented in the revised curriculum, and how African states could identify content for syllabuses that supported national unity in countries that were characterized by ethnic diversity. All four countries had centralized educational systems with national primary and secondary school curricula that were considered the best indicators of what was taught in the schools. Using a process of content analysis, each syllabus topic was separated and recategorized into broad categories, and then into smaller ones. A chart of topics was developed by quantifying the attention the topic received in the syllabus, and then looking for major priorities, exceptions, and questions. Customs, beliefs, and government were found to be universal priorities, although the emphasis varied among countries. The study showed that there is considerable variance in the way social studies builds a national cultural literacy, and each country held different views on what common knowledge their youth should share. (NL)

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Cultural Literacy and African Education

by Merry M. Merryfield

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In the years following their independence, African countries changed inherited colonial educational systems. A major reform focused on rewriting history, geography, and civics courses at every level to reflect perspectives and concerns of new, independent states. In the process of developing national syllabuses many ministries of education faced the thorny issue of dealing with diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives on history and contemporary issues. Whose cultural norms and views of the past were to be sanctioned by the new national curricula? Were the largest ethnic groups or the ethnic groups represented by the new political powers to shape the revised courses in their image? Or would the national curricula reflect some amalgamation of the ethnic mosaics of the new nations?

Over the last twenty-five years curricular decisions have been made, revised, questioned and rewritten. African countries have taken a multitude of approaches in changing curricula from the content and perspectives of colonial powers to those of independent nations. The issue of what content should serve as the officially sanctioned cultural knowledge for all youth has continued to spark controversy (Abernethy, 1971; Adaralegbe, 1972; Bogonko, 1980; Csapo, 1983; Fafuna and Aisiku, 1982; July, 1983; Nduka, 1973; Ukeje, 1966).

This ongoing controversy is not unlike the current debate in the United States on whether or not a certain body of cultural knowledge should be taught in all American schools. The question of "cultural literacy," as framed by E.D. Hirsch (1987, 1988) and others (Bloom, 1987; Estes et al.; Newman, 1988; Westbury and Purves, 1988) can be useful in analysing the decisions made by African countries as they set forth courses of study that reflect a government's cultural and, of course, political priorities.

This paper explores the concept of cultural literacy within a framework of current primary school social studies syllabuses in four African countries. Primary education is the focus as it bears the responsibility for mass education in Africa. The paper seeks to answer the question, are there topics or categories of cultural knowledge within primary social studies that are considered by these four countries--Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria and Zimbabwe--to be essential for the development of national cultural literacy? That is, do African governments through their national syllabuses mandate the same types of cultural knowledge--such as historical stories that glorify the nation's past--or are categories unique to each country and unrelated to the choices made by other African nations?

The first section of the paper discusses the concept of cultural literacy as set forth by Hirsch and others. A second section identifies limitations and potential benefits in applying the term to African education. The third section analyzes the primary school social studies syllabuses, and the final discussion presents the overall findings.

Cultural Literacy

Cultural literacy is a term popularized by E.D. Hirsch (1987). In simple terms it refers to the common knowledge that enables students to make sense of what they read; it is that background information necessary to interpret the world through a cultural lens. Cultural literacy encompasses "culture-cracking," (Estes et al., 1988) the ability to associate words with a body of remembered facts and details that provide a cultural context for comprehending new words or facts. This shared background knowledge allows the reader to go beyond literal meanings to implied meanings, interpretations that

words conjure up in a specific cultural context. Hirsch uses the lyrics of Waltzing Matilda as an example of the national character of cultural literacy. A culturally literate Australian would know the connotations of swagman, billy-bong, and kulibar. While other Anglophones hearing the song would probably think Waltzing Matilda means dancing with a girl, Australians would know it means walking with a knapsack. It is the difference between decoding words and recognizing the meaning shared by the national culture.

For the purpose of this paper, culture refers to knowledge and behavior of a people at a certain time that distinguishes them from other peoples. Cultural literacy is an essential core of knowledge, skills and values that serve as a common denominator of cultural understanding for a people, in this case an African country.

Applying The Concept of Cultural Literacy to African Education

The significance of cultural literacy in understanding African education relates to the paradox most African states face in identifying content for national syllabuses that supports national unity in countries characterized by ethnic diversity.[1] Can we generalize about the kinds of information needed for cultural literacy whether for Kenyan, Nigerian, Malawian or Zimbabwean youth? Are there certain categories of information commonly used in African educational systems to build national identity? Or is the content that a ministry of education identifies for a national syllabus idiosyncratic, totally unrelated to the choices of other nations? A content analysis of

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[1] Syllabuses are the formal documents through which ministries of education or curriculum development centers outline the content of courses for teachers. Syllabuses usually include overall goals and objectives of the course and, in some countries, offer suggestions on teaching and evaluation strategies.

social studies syllabuses across four African nations can contribute to a better understanding of the role of African education in the development of a national culture and national unity.

There are, of course, many problems is applying Hirsch's cultural literacy to African education. When speaking of culture in the African context, scholars rarely confine the term culture to the written word or a concern over the skills of reading and writing that make up literacy (Brislin and Segall, 1975; Cole et al., 1971; Levinson and Malone, 1980). Many persons, including this author, have written of the perils of applying western ideas to contexts of developing countries (Kumar, 1979; Merryfield, 1985; O'Barr, Spain and Tessler, 1973; Triandis and Berry, 1980). There are many courses in the primary curriculum besides social studies that impart cultural knowledge, skills and values. Literature, language courses, religious knowledge, art, music and even such technical subjects as agriculture teach much cultural information. The hidden curriculum of the school also affects students' cultural knowledge, skills and values. Social studies is, however, a very fertile area as it includes the study of history, the nation and its peoples, other countries and their cultures, the relationship of people to their environments, social change, politics, economics, and many other topics that provide youth with background information that contributes to their construction of their own identity and their world view.

This paper is also limited in that it looks at only four out of the over fifty countries on the African continent. Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria and Zimbabwe were chosen as representing different geographic regions, political decisions, and economic realities. They also have made different choices in the ways

their educational systems address national development goals (see Merryfield, 1986 and 1988). Although they had varied experiences with British colonialism, they still share British traditions in education. Therefore, conclusions reached in this paper may differ from an examination of African countries that inherited a French, Portuguese or Belgian system of education. The countries selected here also represent different time-frames in curriculum development as Nigeria has been revising its syllabuses since 1960 and Zimbabwe completed its first social studies syllabus as an independent black state in 1982.

Social Studies Syllabuses and Cultural Literacy

In general, African countries have centralized educational systems with national primary and secondary school syllabuses. National examinations at the end of primary school select a relatively few students for secondary education. Since the content of the exams comes from the national syllabuses, teachers usually follow the mandated topics unless they have no instructional materials or training in the content, or unless the teachers perceive the topics as controversial in the local community (Merryfield, 1986). Thus the syllabuses are probably the best indicator, albeit an imperfect one, of what is actually taught in a nation's schools.

The categories and topics discussed below were derived through a content analysis of the primary social studies syllabuses in Kenya (1985), Malawi (1982), Nigeria (1983) and Zimbabwe (1982). Although all the syllabuses consist of social science content, there is some attention to the humanities. In an effort to make social studies relevant, other topics ranging from road safety to drug abuse have been included by some countries.

Across the countries, the syllabuses vary in length and the level of specificity (see Appendix A for a sample page from each syllabus). For example, the Kenyan syllabus devotes a half-page out of its 33 page total (1.5%) to European exploration and the period of colonial rule; Zimbabwe's has two pages out of the 48 total (4%), and Malawi six pages out of 63 (9.5%). Nigeria does not cover the topic at all in its 144-page syllabus.

The process of content analysis included separating each topic in each syllabus sentence by sentence and then recategorizing them one by one, first into broad categories (such as customs, people in the past, the environment) and, second, into smaller categories (from customs came marriage, religion, dress, etc.). The process has been described in depth by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Merryfield (1986). A third step examined all data again in a search for misinterpretations based on the context of the words within the complete syllabus and possible application of the topic to two or more categories (such as pollution under both the environment and health).

The next step involved the development of a chart of topics across the four countries with some quantification of the amount of the attention the topic received in each syllabus. The final analysis looked for major priorities, exceptions and questions. In the last step, the syllabuses were again scanned to make sure the chart was correct when a major topic for other countries, or a topic assumed to be of some priority through the researcher's previous work did not appear or appeared underrepresented.

The categories that emerged from the data analysis are outlined in Tables 1 and 2. An examination of Table 1 reveals the major topics for each country. The sections below describe each nation's priorities.

Kenya

The Kenyan syllabus, "Geography, History and Civics: A Combined Course for Standards I-VIII," integrates the three traditional social science disciplines. The major topics (see Table 1) hold few surprises. Much attention is given towards learning about the nation's economy (agriculture and industry rank first and second in amount of attention; communication and transportation rank eighth, and trade is tenth) and the nation's people (customs and beliefs of our people ranks fifth, history of the nation is sixth, the local community seventh, and peoples of our nation, ninth).

The underlying rationale for this syllabus is relevance to the child in the local community and the nation. Much of the content of the first few years is drawn from the local area. Teachers are told to use the local examples to teach such topics as "famous prophets, medicinemen and rainmakers," or the "way of life of pastoral communities."

Although there is mention of other forms of government (that of six African states), much attention is given to the structure of Kenya's local and national governments, national symbols and philosophy (the Nyayo philosophy, the District Focus), and the nation's political party, KANU.

The least integrated topic is the physical environment. As in traditional geography courses, this syllabus focuses on physical features, climate, vegetation, longitude and latitude. These descriptive sections serve as background for some attention to current issues, such as population pressures on the land and urban problems. The sections on physical environment as well as those on people are arranged in an expanding environment sequence beginning with the local community, the province, Kenya, Africa, and, finally, "Kenya and the World."

Malawi

The "Primary School Syllabuses: Geography, History and Civics" for Malawi include eight years of the separate subjects of geography and history, and four years (standards 5-8) of civics. Malawi is one of two Anglophone African nations that did not have an integrated social studies in its primary schools in the mid-1980s (Merryfield, 1988).[2] These three subjects are quite noticeable in the list of Malawi's priorities (see Table 1).

The prominence of history is striking, especially in comparison to the other three countries. The topics of European expansion and the colonial era include about 60% of the content within the history category; pre-colonial history makes up 25%, and independence to the present, 15%. Unlike the other syllabuses reviewed here, Malawi's includes many of the traditional topics of western civilization courses, including the civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Ancient Greece and Rome, feudalism and the European Renaissance. These topics are not unexpected given President Banda's appreciation of British education. Malawi's syllabus also gives many times more attention to African history and the history of the nation than do the other countries' syllabuses. It also glorifies two native sons, John Chilembwe, for his revolt against colonial injustice, and Hastings Banda, for his role in the independence movement and national development.

Landforms, climate and weather are major topics in the geography section. As with Kenya, both environment and people are sequenced in a progression from the school and home to the local community, the nation, Africa and the world. However, Malawi's syllabus gives much more attention to

[2] The other country is Tanzania.

Africa and other countries around the world than do the other three syllabuses.

Malawi also devotes a larger section of its syllabus to citizenship (proper attitudes, rights and duties) and local government (the village headman, the traditional authority, the district council), than any of the other countries.

Although Malawi's syllabus does allocate considerable time to the study of people of Malawi (ranks fourth) and customs and beliefs of Malawians (sixth), it also differs from the other three countries in its substantial content of people of other nations. This attention is consistent with the syllabus' world history approach and President Banda's appreciation of British education.

Malawi's syllabus also has a number of prescribed behaviors, ranging from honesty and loyalty to the proper way to cross a road. These messages are categorized as "advocated behaviors" to differentiate them from people's existing beliefs or customs.

Nigeria

Nigeria was the first independent African country to experiment with integrated social studies for mass education. Its syllabus, the "National Curriculum for Primary Social Studies," is a much more radical change from colonial curricula than the social studies of the other three countries. It is also over twice as long as any of the other three syllabuses despite the fact that Nigeria has only six years of primary education.

Nigeria's syllabus is first and foremost a vision of education for development. Unlike the other three syllabuses, Nigeria's is written as a set of problems to be solved. Major headings include such topics as "Problems of

Living in the Family," "Problems of Employment," "Problems of Group Conflict," "Religious Problems," "Problems of Toilet Facilities," and "Problems of Resource Distribution." Emphasis is on student-generated problem-solving.

Customs and beliefs of our people is the category that rates the most coverage in the syllabus. The emphasis here is on male/female relationships and religious beliefs. These topics are addressed by such questions as "Why must we respect imported marriage customs?" and "Explain the effects of religious excesses on the society."

Advocated behaviors, especially those related to health and safety, rank second in priority (see Table 1). Health topics range from problems of illness and personal hygiene to prevention of disease and food poisoning. Safety includes the problems of road accidents, natural disasters and fire. Again the syllabus poses questions to clarify and deal with problems.

Natural resources of the nation, income/money, and work/employment are other major topics where students examine real problems. The syllabus asks students to "suggest ways and means of how best resources can be fairly distributed" and poses such questions as "What are the roles of government in combating unemployment?"

Although government ranks fourth in the content of the syllabus, the focus is on leadership in a general sense and on services the local, state and national governments provide. Unlike the other three syllabuses, Nigeria's does not mention organization of the government at any level. There is attention to political parties, elections, laws, and other topics of a political nature (see Table 2-E), but no direct reference is made to Nigeria's presidents or military rulers. In fact, one of the most unusual characteristics of Nigerian social studies appears to be its lack of history.

For nowhere in the syllabus is there a glimpse of Nigeria's rich past. Is this omission due to other priorities? Or perhaps to a lack of agreement over Nigeria's history?

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's syllabus was published two years after its independence in 1980. Although most of the traditional disciplines (history, geography and civics) can be found in the syllabus, Zimbabwe's approach is oriented to the pragmatism of development needs. Advocated behaviors related to health, proper diet and society rank as priorities. Topics include such basics as "keeping food and water clean," "caring for a baby," "healthy boy/girl relationships," and a balanced diet. Other major categories, customs and beliefs of our people, the local community, and the family provide information on traditional norms and values as well as social change. Together, all these categories address social behavior in a sequence of expanding environments not unlike the syllabuses of Kenya and Malawi.

History ranks second as a content category. Approximately 34% of historical content could be classified as European expansion and the period of white rule. The pre-colonial period (16%), independence to the present (1%), important individuals in the past (19%), and comparisons of past and present (30%) make up the other historical categories.

Although government ranks fifth overall, the syllabus emphasizes laws (Parliament's laws, local laws) and national symbols (our national holidays, the flag, coat of arms and national anthem) rather than elections or political parties.

As in Nigeria, Zimbabwe teaches about money/income with such topics as currencies of different countries, exchange rates, and family and community

income and expenditure. Some of the topics, such as postal orders and checks, have a flavor of everyday economics while others, such as ways of saving, promote certain values.

Overall Findings

There are several conclusions that can be drawn about the concept of cultural literacy and African education. First, it appears that there are some very broad categories within the social studies syllabuses that are addressed in all four countries. Looking across all four syllabuses (see Table 1) one sees two categories--customs and beliefs of our people and our government--that are priorities in every country.

However, subtopics under these major categories vary widely. A close look at the content specified in the syllabuses under the category customs and beliefs of our people reveals that the content differs considerably (see Table 2-D). First, only food, clothing and shelter are subcategories found in each syllabus. Second, even in a subtopic as concrete as shelter, the syllabuses specify a wide range of content from types of dwellings in the country (Kenya), to shelter through the ages (Malawi), to contemporary housing problems (Nigeria), to design of buildings (Zimbabwe). See Table 3.

Government is a second universal category, although subtopics vary considerably (see Table 2-E). Kenya emphasizes the national government, Malawi, citizenship, Nigeria, leadership and government services, and Zimbabwe, laws.

This phenomenon of similarity in major categories but differences in sub-categories holds for these categories: the family, the local community, people and work, trade, transportation and communication. It appears that

even though the syllabuses have some similarities in major categories, they are quite different in the interpretation of content in sub-categories.

The differences across the syllabuses are intriguing. Truly the nations have diverse priorities in what knowledge their children should share. In the past social studies was derived from social science content with some attention to values. Now we see syllabuses with an applied focus where advocated behaviors related to personal relationships, health and safety are higher priorites than the nation's history or basic geographic knowledge. Perhaps a new type of cultural literacy is emerging that is a metamorphosis into development education.

Specificity in the use of language is another variation. Table 4 was prepared by taking specific words from the syllabuses that students are expected to know at the end of primary school. As in Hirsch's list of what every American needs to know, these words reflect shared background knowledge that has been identified by the ministries of education (that is, the governments) for all youth. Looking across Table 4, it is Nigeria that appears somewhat unique. For Nigeria's syllabus focuses on contemporary problems in general. There are few proper names, either for people or places, in the entire syllabus. The decision as to what peoples or individuals are studied is left to the teacher. Although Zimbabwe's syllabus has a practical focus in its content on advocated behaviors and health, it does develop a vocabulary of historical and political references.

In conclusion, this analysis of syllabuses in four African nations has found that there is considerable variance in the way primary social studies builds a national cultural literacy. It appears that categories of social studies content are unique to each country. Some countries, such as Malawi,

use social studies to develop a national vocabulary of historical, social, political and geographic references. Other countries, such as Nigeria, have revised social studies away from traditional social science content to a focus on contemporary problems. Some countries, such as Kenya and Zimbabwe, have chosen a combination of these alternatives. Based on this analysis, it appears that African countries, at least at the level of primary social studies, have different conceptualizations of what common knowledge their youth should share.

There are a number of issues stemming from these conclusions. If primary schools don't teach a common national heritage (or teach very little) and the value of pride in the nation, where will young Africans learn such lessons? What will be the long term results of not having a shared vocabulary of important people, institutions, places and events?

On the other hand, given the realities of African problems, should priorities be given to practical aspects of social studies, such as social relations, safety and proper diet? Have African ministries of education made a conscious choice between a social science, "liberal education" approach versus an applied, "development ed" approach to cultural literacy?

Finally, is there a relationship between the political realities of a nation and the type of cultural literacy its primary education promotes? This study would seem to indicate that there is a continuum whereby more conservative governments tend to continue the tradition of social studies as the subjects of history, geography, and civics, and more liberal governments tend to infuse or replace the social science content with other practical information related to health, safety and problem-solving that is directly

relevant to the lives of the students. More research needs to be done to verify this premise. What will be the common knowledge of young Africans in the twenty-first century? Will their education contribute to a national identity, problem-solving in the local community or improved health?

Primary education is one of the few common experiences that the vast majority of African youth share. The primary school curriculum is potentially one of an African nation's greatest tools for developing nationalism and unity. The role that shared background knowledge--cultural literacy--can play in national development must not be underestimated.

TABLE 1

MAJOR TOPICS BY COUNTRY [1]

KENYA	MALAWI	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
1. Agriculture	1. History (most attention to European expansion and the colonial era)	1. Customs and beliefs of our people (male/female relationships and religion)	1. Advocated behaviors (most attention on health, food, social behavior)
2. Industry	2. Landforms	2. Advocated behaviors (health, safety)	2. History (most attention to European expansion and era of white rule)
3. The Physical Environment (especially landforms)	3. Our government (most attention to citizenship and local government)	3. Natural resources of the nation	3. Customs and beliefs of our people
4. Government (national government, national philosophy symbols)	4. Peoples of our nation	4. Our government (most attention to leadership and government services)	4. Health
5. Customs & beliefs of our people	5. People of other nations/cultures	5. Health	5. Our government (most attention to laws and national philosophy/symbols)
6. History of the nation	6. Customs and beliefs of our people	6. Income and money	6. Communication/ transportation
7. The local community (people and environment)	7. Agriculture	7. The family	7. Income & money
8. Communication/ transportation	8. Advocated behaviors (safety, loyalty)	8. Work/employment	8. Local and national organizations
9. Peoples of our nation	9. Industry	9. Agriculture	9. The local community
10. Trade	10. Climate/weather	10. Safety	10. The family

[1] Topics are listed in order of the amount of attention (as quantified by number of lines) they received in ratio with the total length of the syllabus. Therefore, the ministries advocate that primary school pupils spend more time on these topics than others. Topics in parentheses are those that dominate within the larger topic. For example, the Kenyan syllabus pays much more attention to landforms (mountains, rivers, etc.) in its treatment of the physical environment than other sub-topics.

Table 2 A-F
All Topics in the Primary School Social Studies Syllabuses in Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria and Zimbabwe

KEY *** = Major topic ** = Some attention * = Minimal attention
0 = No attention

	KENYA	MALAWI	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
A. People and their environment	***	***	***	***
The family	**	*	***	***
The school	**	**	**	**
The local community/district/ state/province	***	*	**	***
People of the nation	***	***	1	* --
Peoples of other nations	**	***	**	*
Movement of people	*	*	**	*
Population	**	**	0	0
Urbanization/cities	*	*	**	0
B. People in the past	***	***	*	***
Origins of man and pre-colonial period	**	***	0	**
European exploration and the colonial period	**	***	0	***
Independence to the present	**	**	0	*
Important individuals in the past	*	**	2	**
Comparison of past and present (e.g. food, stories, work, clothing, communication)	*	*	*	**
C. People and work	***	**	**	**
Employment/work	*	**	***	**
Agriculture	***	***	*	**
Industry	***	***	*	*
mining	*	*	*	0
fishing	**	**	*	0
tourism	**	*	0	0
forestry	**	*	0	0
Technology	*	0	**	0
Communication/transportation	***	**	**	***
Income/money	0	*	***	***
Trade	***	**	**	**
D. People's beliefs and behavior				
(1) Customs and beliefs of our people	***	***	***	***
religion	*	0	***	0
male/female relations (includes marriage)	*	0	***	*
clothing	*	*	**	**
food (as custom)	*	**	**	*
shelter	*	**	**	**
others (e.g., dance, music festivals)	**	**	***	**

Table 2 (Continued)

	KENYA	MALAWI	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
(2) Advocated behaviors	**	***	***	***
health	*	0	***	***
sanitation/pollution	0	0	**	0
safety	*	***	***	*
food (as advocated related to health)	0	0	0	**
advocated social behaviors (e.g. tolerance, loyalty, no drugs)	**	***	**	**
Customs of other peoples in other nations	**	**	**	*
E. People organize themselves	***	***	***	***
(1) Non-governmental/organizations				
local and national organizations	**	0	**	***
international organizations	*	*	**	*
(2) Our Government	***	***	***	***
(a) Local/state/district/ provincial government	**	***	*	0
(b) National government	***	*	0	*
elections	*	*	**	0
political parties	*	*	**	0
laws	*	*	**	***
government services	*	*	***	0
national symbols/ philosophy/national unity	***	*	**	***
government spending	0	**	0	*
leadership	*	*	***	0
citizenship	*	***	*	0
(3) Other systems of government	*	0	0	*
F. The physical environment	***	***	**	*
landforms (e.g., river, mountains)	***	***	0	*
climate/weather	**	***	0	0
natural resources (e.g., water, minerals, soil)	**	**	**	*
wildlife/reserves	**	*	0	*

1 Although Nigeria's syllabus gives much attention to people and culture, there is no specification of which peoples beyond those in the local community and "others" or "foreigners."

2 The syllabus mentions traditional leaders and chiefs but does not name individuals.

Table 3
Samples of syllabus listings included in the category
"Customs and Beliefs of our People"

	KENYA	MALAWI	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
Dress	"Dressing, clothing, ornaments" "Factors that influence the mode of dressing: climate, occupation, availability of materials, fashion."	"The need for clothes" "Where clothes are obtained" "What they are made of and sources of these materials"	"What problems do people have with understanding other people's dress habits?" "Name some Nigerian dresses."	"Clothing and accessories, designs through the ages. Traditional, African, Asian and western." "Clothes for special occasions, e.g., marriage, funerals, legal." "Clothes for protection, e.g., weather, thorns, rocks, fire."
Food	"The various methods of obtaining food in the past and at present." "Scarcity of food..."	"Garden crops: The different varieties grown locally." "Knowledge of ways people prepare their food in the area."	"What are some food we eat at school?" "Why do we sometimes have very little to eat?"	"Cooked, uncooked and processed food eaten in the home." "Preparation of food." "Staple diets of various people."
Male/female relationship	"Types of marriage" "preparation for marriage" planned parenthood"	None	"What are the common courses of disagreement between two married people?" "Reasons why some people support marriages outside the ethnic group" "Why should spinters [sic] and bachelors not be involved in sexual relationships."	"Responsibilities of marriage"

Table 3 (Continued)
Samples of syllabus listings included in the category
"Customs and Beliefs of our People"

	KENYA	MALAWI	NIGERIA	ZIMBABWE
Religion	"African traditional religion" "Role of religion in society" "Religions ceremonies and festivals" "The main religions in Kenya"	None	"Why do some people display excesses in their religious practices" "Identify the extent to which religious bodies would own and manage educational, health and other social services" "What steps should the state take in cases of religious conflicts."	None
Shelter	"Differing types of dwelling e.g., Luo dwellings, Thrkana dwellings, Maasai dwellings: methods of construction and materials used." "Modern houses."	"Why we need shelter." "The development of man has changed shelters throughout the ages."	"Can there be enough houses for everyone, if not why not?" "What can and is being done by individuals and agencies to solve the problems of housing?"	"Old buildings in this and other countries, their functions and origins." "Renting and buying houses."
Other topics	"Age-groups, age sets." "The clan." "Collection and preservation of artefacts and other cultural materials."	"The local customs commonly used." "Parallels of such customs in those of other nations." "Musical instruments." "Traditional dances."	"Explain why traditional festivals are allowed to continue." "What are the different kinds of adornment or decoration used by people in your community?"	None

TABLE 4 Cultural Literacy: Some Tentative Examples from the Social Studies Syllabuses

What every KENYAN should know	What every MALAWIAN should know	What every NIGERIAN should know	What every ZIMBABWIAN should know
age-sets	Achewa	balance of payments	1980
afforestation	bore-holes	community sanitation	balanced diet
African socialism	Chilembwe Rising, The	drug abuse	barter
Commonwealth, The	dambos	food poisoning	Chief Mapondera
customary marriage	hire purchase	individual rights	leisure
irrigation	Livingstone, David	industrial accidents	Lobengula
Harambee	Malawi Congress Party	inter-ethnic marriage	migrant labour
KANU	Ngwazi, The	NEPA	Ndebele, The
Koran, The	Nyika Highlands	political parties	road safety
Mau Mau war, The	Protectorate, The	pollution	self-reliance
Nilotes	Shire River, The	polygamy	socialist democracies
nomadic pastorialism	slave trade	religious conflict	Tongogare, Joziah
Nyerere, Julius	The State of Emergency	trade unions	UNO
OAU	village headman	traditional chieftaincy	white settlers
soil erosion	Zebra and level crossings	WHO	Zimbabwe Bird

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE PAGES FROM THE SYLLABUSES

THEME: KENYA AND HER NEIGHBOURS

I.0 : THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

I.I : Position, size and shape of Kenya and her neighbours

I.2 : Main physical features: Mountains, hills, rift valley, drainage

I.3 : Climate and Seasons: rotation of the earth, time

I.4 : Vegetation: zonal distribution of vegetation in Eastern Africa: Forests, grasslands, scrubs, reeds etc.

2.0 : THE PEOPLE OF EASTERN AFRICA

2.I : The main language group in Uganda, Tanzania, Ethipia, Somalia and Sudan

(a) Bantu
(b) Nilotes
(c) Cushites
(d) Semites

2.2. : The other communities found in Eastern Africa: Europeans, Asians

2.3 : Origins and reasons for migration and settlement in Eastern Africa of the:

(a) Bantu
(b) Nilotes
(c) Cushites
(d) Other communities found in Eastern Africa

2.4 : Factors influencing the distribution of people in the region

(a) Physical factors: relief, climate, soil, vegetation
(b) Economic
(c) Social
(d) Political

(h) The influence and importance of the British South Africa Company.

(i) The establishment of the Legislative Council in 1907.

(j) The growth of towns and their main functions.

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2. A Visual History of Rhodesias and Nyasaland (Evans)
3. A Brief History of Nyasaland by A. M. Morris
4. Mbiri ya Pfuko la Malawi by B. Pachai or Malawi: The History of the Nation by B. Pachai
5. The History of Central Africa by P. E. N. Tindall
6. Beginning African History by C. V. R. Bell.

STANDARD 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY, 1900 - 1964

1. THE CHILEMBWE RISING, 1914 - 1915

(a) The life of John Chilembwe, the ideas he had and the work he did in Malawi, especially his feeling for the future of the country, his determination never to give in and how his vision for the future has been fulfilled in our time.

(b) The importance of other leaders such as Kamwana and Domingo.

(c) The main causes of the Rising:

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CONTENT OUTLINE – PRIMARY SIX

UNIT 1	OBJECTIVES	CONTENT	SUGGESTED TEACHING METHODS & ACTIVITIES	SUGGESTED TEACHING MATERIALS	EVALUATION
PROBLEMS OF INTER-MAR-RIAGES:	At the end of the lesson pupils should be able to: a) Decide on what an inter-marriage is and why it may be a healthy relationship. b) State reasons for and against inter-marriages. c) Give reasons to support the need to encourage intra-ethnic marriages. d) Outline problems peculiar to each, and common to both intra and inter-ethnic marriages. e) Distinguish between the marriage of one man to one woman, (monogamy) and that between one man and many women (polygamy). f) Constructively discuss the advantages and disadvantages of monogamy and polygamy.	a) Characteristics of intra-ethnic and inter-ethnic marriages. b) For what reasons may couples get married. c) Reasons why some people object to marriages outside the ethnic group. d) Reasons why some people support marriages outside the ethnic group. e) There are problems which are common to any kind of marriage, what are they? f) But there are also problems peculiar to intra-ethnic marriages, what are they? g) In some cases a man is allowed to marry only one wife; in others he can marry more than one. What is the name of each of these types	a) Refer the class to what they learnt about marriage practices in Primary five; and briefly remind them of what a marriage is. b) Ask some pupils who know, to tell the rest of the class where their mothers and fathers come from and their ethnic group. Find out if there are others whose parents come from the same ethnic groups; and how they come to know that. c) Use one example each from the two groups and explain to the class the meaning of 'intra'- and 'inter-marriage.' d) Tell a short story of a couple you met who were from different ethnic groups, and how they spoke to each other in English, but their children were able to speak in two Nigerian languages and in English. Then ask how that could happen; and how useful speaking many languages would be to the children, their parents and Nigeria as a whole.	a) The pupils as resource persons. b) Chalkboard for recording points made by debaters and notes. c) Pictures, charts and relevant diagrams. d) Story books on family life etc.	a) To state reasons why people marry generally; and why within or outside their ethnic groups. b) On the basis of reasons offered, let them say if it is right or wrong to condemn any form of marriage. c) Using a worksheet or chalkboard, write sentences and the class complete some blanks correctly to bring out the meanings of: i) intra-ethnic marriage. ii) inter-ethnic marriage. iii) polygamy marriage. iv) monogamy marriage. d) Collect relevant information from their parents and constructively debate on the advantages and disadvantages of:

10. SOCIAL SERVICES AND VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

A. MAIN CONCEPTS AND RELATED CONTENT	B. EXAMPLES OF SKILLS
(a) PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS HELP OTHERS (i) Definition of the role of Government and voluntary organisations (ii) Voluntary organisations in the country which provide for :- (i) People's needs e.g. care of the aged, disabled, refugees and orphans. (ii) Wild life and domestic animals. (iii) The national interest.	(a) Classifying, e.g. types of voluntary organisations. Relating, reasoning, e.g. sort of help needed in different circumstances. Discuss organisations that helped the refugees during the war.
(b) PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS IN THE PAST HAVE DEVOTED THEIR LIVES TO HELPING OTHERS The history of local voluntary organisations and the people who have been involved in them.	(b) Comparing, e.g. the development of various voluntary organisations. Sequencing, researching, e.g. using reference materials to trace the history.

SYLLABUS : STAGE 4 (GRADES 6 - 7)

1. LIVING TOGETHER

A. MAIN CONCEPTS AND RELATED CONTENT	B. EXAMPLES OF SKILLS
(a) OUR WAY OF LIFE : (See Rules and Laws) (i) The Commonwealth and the O.A.U. Zimbabwe's role as a member. (ii)The world as a community of nations:	(a) Identifying various countries (Nations) identify some of the causes of world disharmony (greed and desire for power